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# **Elkton Farms Firehole**

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U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, REGION 3
DELAWARE, MARYLAND, PENNSYLVANIA, VIRGINIA, WEST VIRGINIA AND THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA



# ELKTON FARM FIREHOLE REMOVAL SITE UPDATE

ELKTON TOWNSHIP, CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

**MAY 2006** 

# ORDNANCE NOT A SOUVENIR

Last month in Ventura, California, part of a teacher's hand was blown off by a 40 mm round of ammunition. The teacher had found the old round while hunting, several years ago, and believed it to be safe. He kept it on his desk for years, and one day it went off when he hit the desk with his hand. (Ventura County Star, April 4, 2006)

If you have any unexploded discarded military munitions, please call the local Elkton police department by dialing 911. Please do not dispose of the unexploded munitions yourself, or attempt to bring anything to the Elkton Farm Firehole Site for disposal. Someone will come and get it from you at no cost.



Thermite Bomb
Found at Elkton Farm Firehole Site



M43 81mm Mortar, Fuzed Found at Elkton Farm Firehole Site



40 mm Rounds Found at Elkton Farm Firehole Site

Call 911 if you have any unexploded munitions or munitions debris.

Trained specialists from the fire or police department will pick up the items at no cost and without punitive action.

## FIREHOLE CLEANUP

On February 8, 2006, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) began the cleanup of the Elkton Farms Firehole. Cleanup crews are using magnetic locators to find metal items in the first 18 inches of soil in the firehole area. When detected, the area is checked to uncover what objects are there.

To date, EPA has found and removed 107 pounds of munitions and munitions debris and 1033 pounds of non-munitions scrap metal. Three 81 mm mortars containing inert material have been found and detonated in place. It is likely that more 81 mm mortars will be found.



Magnetic Locator used at the site.

# Call 911 if you have unexploded munitions or munitions debris for pickup

For More Information on the Elkton Farm Firehole Cleanup



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www.epaosc.org/site\_profile.asp?site\_id=1299

## SITE HISTORY

The Elkton Farm Firehole Site is located two miles northwest of Elkton, Maryland on Zeitler Road. The site consists of an open field that has historically been used for agricultural purposes except for a brief period during and around the second world (WW2). During this period of time, Triumph Industries, Inc., which manufactured military munitions during WW2, used about 32 acres of the field for the burning and disposal of waste explosives materials.

Triumph placed the wastes into one or more pits in the field and then burned them. Over the years, these materials were spread out over about 55 acres of the site. We will refer to the entire contaminated area as the "Firehole."

The exact location of the Firehole was not known until the early 1990's when the U.S. Department of Defense found historical documents from Triumph Industries giving an approximate location of the Firehole. After verifying the Firehole's existence, the State of Maryland requested EPA's assistance in cleaning up the Firehole. The contamination has been at the site for over 50 years, and although no casualties have occurred, the site still poses a threat.

In February, EPA began to remove unexploded munitions, munitions debris and TNT contaminated soil from the top 18 inches of the Firehole site. This phase of the cleanup is anticipated to take from three to six depending on months, weather conditions and the amount of potentially explosive material found. During the next phase, EPA will remove all buried wastes from the site.



# EPA Update for the Elkton Farm Firehole Site

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